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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 001112

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TAGS: PGOV PREL LE IS CY

SUBJECT: TFLE01: CYPRUS PARLIAMENT CONDEMNS ISRAELI ACTION

Classified By: Ambassador Ronald L. Schlicher, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) The Cyprus House of Representatives on July 13 unanimously passed a resolution condemning Israel's attacks against Lebanon and the Palestinian territories (full text follows). The resolution criticized Israel's "flagrant violation" of international law, calling it "state terrorism." While the House did "not condone" the abductions of Israeli soldiers, it criticized Israel for using them as a "pretext" for attacks. The resolution has not been reported widely in the local press so far.

¶2. (C) Our sources in parliament tell us that the text was quietly agreed among party leaders, prodded along by the communist AKEL party, then quickly passed without debate in the full chamber. The head of the center-right opposition DISY, who might have sought to moderate the tone of the resolution, was reportedly not on hand for the leaders' drafting session. According to one of his DISY allies, AKEL was therefore able to ram through a more polemical draft.

¶3. (C) COMMENT: Yesterday's shrill parliamentary resolution contrasts with FM Lillikas's careful statement that the GOC disagrees with "any attacks against any country" and supports a peaceful settlement through political means and based on UNSCRs. The FM's cautious statement reflects the GOC's desire to protect what it perceives to be Cyprus's position as an honest broker in the region -- as well as the broader public's fairly moderate views on the Arab-Israeli conflict. Greek Cypriots, recalling their own experiences with war and invasion, may sympathize with Palestinians and Lebanese -- but anti-Israeli sentiments are not particularly pronounced here. Coverage of the ongoing conflict in the Greek Cypriot press has been extensive and fairly critical of Israel -- but public reaction to the ongoing crisis has so far been limited to polemical statements issued by AKEL and a raft of smaller leftist parties.

¶4. (C) Separately, we anticipate the GOC will be supportive of any efforts we may need to mount from Cyprus in support of Embassy Beirut. We do not consider parliament's resolution to be an accurate barometer of public opinion beyond the vocal left wing. END COMMENT.

¶5. (U) BEGIN TEXT OF ROC PARLIAMENTARY RESOLUTION (unofficial Embassy translation):

The House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus, following with concern developments in the Middle East region, and particularly the escalating military aggression against the Palestinian territories and the sovereign state of Lebanon, unanimously resolves as follows:

II. Condemns strongly and unreservedly Israel's aggression resulting in the death of innocent people;

III. Considers that Israel's actions flagrantly violate the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state of Lebanon, international law, and the pertinent UN resolutions, and are tantamount to state terrorism;

III. Regards that Israel's conduct shatters efforts aimed at promoting peace in the wider Middle East region and undermines world security;

IV. Does not condone the abductions of Israeli soldiers, which the state of Israel uses as a pretext in order to perpetuate attacks that further exacerbate the already tense situation;

IV. Reaffirms its solidarity with and support of the Palestinian people, the Lebanese people, and all Arab peoples;

VI. Reaffirms all its previous resolutions on the situation in the Middle East;

VII. Expects that the United Nations Security Council will urgently deal with the matter for the purpose of terminating Israel's actions and implementing all its pertinent resolution.

END TEXT OF PARLIAMENTARY RESOLUTION.  
SCHLICHER